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SOUTH DELTA WATER AGENCY

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June 26, 1996

Mr. Lester Snow
Executive Director
CalFed Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Proposed Model Water Transfer Act

Dear Mr. Snow:

As you know, the South Delta Water Agency represents water interests at the downstream end of the San Joaquin River System. These interests are very much at risk if water transfers are permitted without adequate scrutiny by an unbiased entity regarding potential impacts on third parties and on the long term interest of the State as a whole. This is unfortunately frustrating for the buyers and sellers who must bear the cost in time and analyses that must precede many, but not all, transfers in order to provide these protections. However, complex issues do not lend themselves to simple expedited solutions. The CEQA/NEPA process is also often frustrating but has been found to be socially necessary.

We believe that it is unacceptable to allow inadequate notice to parties at risk; to shift the burden of proof to parties at risk who do not even have access to necessary data; to permit sellers to be the judges of whether the water to be transferred is either salvaged or a result of reduced water consumption; and to repeal sections of the water code that apply to more issues than just transfers.

We believe that transfers are important and can be expedited in some situations which are not highlighted in the proposed Model Water Transfer Act, but we must strongly disagree with the Act unless it is substantially revised.

The attached memorandum explains our reasons for opposition.

Very truly yours,



JOHN HERRICK



ALEX HILDEBRAND

JH/ce
w/enclosure

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